

### **Yoga's effects**

Yoga has become more and more popular in recent years. People have started to pay their attention and get to know more about yoga. Yoga generally means "yoke" or "union" in the ancient language of India (Cook par. 4). The word indicates controlling our minds and senses, then connecting to the body at the same time to steady it. It's not like running or boxing, but a quiet and peaceful movement that can also bring our bodies many benefits. Actually, doing yoga has many effects: it can lead to healing, and a longer life, but also to injury and damage.

First of all, yoga can actually heal diseases. By stretching bones and muscles, yoga can make body more firm and flexible, "which releases the tension in the muscles, should improve back pain" (Asher par.4). For instance, "Cervical Spondylosis" is a kind of disease which affects the neck. My friend had this disease once and suffered with it. After doing yoga for a while she felt much better than before. After all, my friend says: "because yoga's posture and slowly movements, the Cervical Spondylosis is almost gone" (Lyn). Cervical Spondylosis can be minimized through healthy diet and lifestyle, exercises and good structural posture, and this is exactly what yoga can do. Now my friend is doing yoga to keep herself well, and she feels good and healthy when she practices yoga. There is evidence to support that yoga does work and it works well.

Secondly, yoga may lead to a longer life. It seems to make our lives longer is a really hard thing. The spine is a very important part of our bodies. One author states, "the yoga exercises which tone up the nerve-force or electric flux in the spine preserve its flexibility. A man is never old, if his spine is flexible" (Gupta 41). Another two conditions of old age are arteriosclerosis and interstitial glands that are impaired. Arteriosclerosis is a disease which thickening the arterial walls and impaired the blood circulation though aging. Also interstitial gland is narrow space between parts of an organ. Yoga can help to avoid the development of these and also our body can be rejuvenated through breathing exercises; when properly done, slow and rhythmic breathing, it will have a very beneficial effect and tends to prolong life (Gupta 42). We can see that yoga can help us to achieve long life; also, people should do yoga continuously and for an extended time for it to work. Doing yoga only several times won't cause a longer life because it takes time to change body form and structure.

Unfortunately, yoga may also cause injury and damage. Exercise may lead to injury if people are not doing it correctly or overdoing it. According to the research by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, "over the past three years, 13,000 Americans were treated in an emergency room or a doctor's office for yoga-related injuries" (Paul par. 2). This number shows that yoga can cause harm and damage that people can't ignore, and they should get to know yoga and themselves before doing yoga. "Often people get hurt because they assume that yoga is simple and that anybody can pretzel himself or herself on demand" ( Paul par. 3.) There are lots of ways to know about the body itself,

such as checking if any parts of the body feel hurt and considering any injury you had before so you can clearly know what postures to avoid. Besides, some of “the people teaching yoga don’t know enough about it” (Paul, par. 6) is another reason that could cause people to get damage. Some instructors lack training; in other words, choosing an instructor is the most important thing. The right instructor can lead well by using correct instruction. They can correct students if they do wrong movements and help them avoid damage.

Yoga is a good way to exercise and can be a tool to make us live healthier. There are the reasons why people choose yoga. While it can cure diseases and lead to an extending life, it can cause injury and damage as well. Most people may know about its good effects already, but should also learn about some of its bad effects. A factor of healthy lifestyle is doing regular and proper exercises, so yoga is a very good choice. Thus, with a healthy lifestyle, being long-lived is no longer unbelievable and impossible anymore.

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